Mormonism vs. Biblical Christianity: Important Distinctions[1]

Heaven:

LDS: Heaven involves three degrees of glory. (*Doctrines and Covenants*) 76. Exaltation is the highest degree of salvation, attainable in the celestial kingdom, where individuals become "gods" and inherit "all that [the] Father hath" (*Doctrine and Covenants* 84:38). Exalted couples, as gods, may receive the divine responsibility to organize and govern new worlds, similar to how Heavenly Father created this earth. This includes creating physical worlds and populating them with spirit children, continuing the cycle of divine creation (*Doctrine and Covenants* 132:19; *Pearl of Great Price*, Moses 1:33–39).

Bible: Heaven is to be present with the Lord. (John 14:1-4; 2 Corinthians 5:6-8) The Apostle John was shown heaven in Revelation, particularly in chapters 4, 21, and 22. It is forbidden to add to or take away from the prophecy of Revelation. (Revelation 22:18-19)

Hell:

LDS: Hell (outer darkness) only for the "sons of perdition". (*Doctrines and Covenants*) 76.

Bible: Hell is a lake of fire. (Revelation 20:14-15) It is a place where the worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched. (Mark 9:43-48.) Protestants have a binary view of heaven and hell. "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." (John 3:36)

Salvation:

LDS: General (universal) salvation for nearly all people, but there are works necessary to achieve exaltation in the celestial kingdom such as baptism, endowment, and sealing. The LDS interpretation of Ephesians 2:8–9 acknowledges salvation as a gift of grace through faith but emphasizes that faith is active, demonstrated through obedience to God's commandments and participation in ordinances (*e.g.*, baptism, temple rites). Works are integral to the process of salvation, not merely a byproduct. See, *Book of Mormon*, 2 Nephi 25:23 (1830). "For we labor diligently… to persuade our children… to believe in Christ, and to be reconciled to God; for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, ***after all we can do***."

Bible: "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, [9] not of works, lest anyone should boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9.) "[God] who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began". (2 Timothy 1:9) Binary view of heaven and hell from verses such as John 3:36, above. No

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gradations based upon earthly works. Jesus to the thief of the cross: “And Jesus said to him, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.’” (Luke 23:43.)

Jesus as Firstborn Spirit Child:

LDS: Jesus Christ is the firstborn spirit child of Heavenly Father in the pre-mortal existence, where all human spirits were created. Lucifer (Satan) is also a spirit child of Heavenly Father, making him a spiritual brother of Jesus and all humanity. This belief stems from the LDS view that all beings, including Jesus and Lucifer, were part of a pre-mortal council in heaven where God presented His plan of salvation. Jesus volunteered to be the Savior, supporting the plan of agency and redemption, while Lucifer rebelled, seeking to enforce obedience and take God’s glory (*Pearl of Great Price*, Moses 4:1–4; Abraham 3:27–28).

Bible: The Bible does not depict Jesus and Satan (Lucifer) as siblings. Jesus is the eternal Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and Holy Spirit (John 1:1–3, Colossians 2:9). Satan is a created being, a fallen angel who rebelled against God (Isaiah 14:12–15, Revelation 12:7–9). There is no familial relationship; Jesus is divine, while Satan is a creature subordinate to Him (John 12:31, Colossians 1:16–17).

Jesus’ Birth

LDS: Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary through divine means, with Heavenly Father as His literal Father, making Him both divine and human (*Book of Mormon*, Alma 7:10).

Bible: Jesus, as the pre-existent Word (Logos), became incarnate through the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit, not through a physical act with God the Father (Luke 1:30–35, Matthew 1:18–20). His incarnation fulfilled Old Testament prophecies (Isaiah 7:14) and enabled Him to live as fully human and fully divine, atoning for sin through His death and resurrection (Philippians 2:6–11, Hebrews 2:14–17).

Jesus as Second Person of the Trinity

LDS: Jesus is a distinct being, the firstborn spirit child of Heavenly Father, with a glorified physical body. The Godhead comprises three separate personages united in purpose, rejecting the Trinitarian concept (*Doctrine and Covenants* 130:22). This aligns with the LDS view of humans as spirit children with potential to become like God.

Bible: Jesus is fully divine and human, part of the Trinity, co-equal with the Father and Holy Spirit in one essence (John 10:30, Colossians 2:9). The Trinity is a mystery, emphasizing one God in three persons. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” (John 1:1.)